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CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
NAVY DEPARTMENT, Richmond, September 6, 1862.

Hon. THOMAS S. BOCOCK,

Speaker of the House of Representatives:

SIR: In response to the following resolution adopted by the House of Representatives on the 3d instant, "*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Navy be requested to send to this House a copy of the official letter of Flag Officer Forrest, touching the gallant exploits of Commander Taylor, in command of the little steamer Harmony, in her conflict with the enemy's frigate Savannah, which resulted in a heavy loss of men to said frigate and great injury to the same," I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of the letter referred to, and by which you will observe that Commander Fairfax was in command of the "Harmony."

With much respect, your ob't serv't,

S. R. MALLORY,
Secretary of the Navy.

[Copy.]

FLAG OFFICER'S OFFICE, DOCK YARD,
GOSPORT, VA., Sept. 2, 1861

SIR: I directed Commander Fairfax to take charge of the little steam-tug "Harmony," and mount upon her one of the rifled guns of 57 cwt. and carry with him all the projectiles (about thirty) then on hand, and proceed along the coast, in shoal water, to "Pig Point," to exercise his best judgment in an approach to the enemy's frigate Savannah, at anchor off Newport News, and take a position out of reach of her guns to try the range of his; to near her cautiously and do her as much damage as possible. He proceeded, in obedience to these instructions, and the experiment proved a very satisfactory one. I learn to-day that several shells struck the ship, and did great execution; the one on her larboard quarter *particularly*. After exhausting his ammunition, he returned with the little steamer, without sustaining any injury, or the occurrence of any accident. He fired the two remaining shells, on his return, at the shipping off Fortress Monroe, the effect of which could not be seen. Great credit is due Commander Fairfax for this deed of noble daring, and the success which attended the exploit. Permit me, therefore, to commend him to the notice of the Department.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

F. FORREST,
Flag Officer, &c.

Hon. S. R. MALLORY, *Secretary of the Navy*,
Richmond, Va.

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